

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An isolated hyperthermostable protease, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a functional equivalent of said hyperthermostable protease.

2. An isolated polynucleotide encoding the hyperthermostable protease or functional equivalent thereof according to claim 1.

3. The polynucleotide according to claim 2, which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

4. The hyperthermostable protease gene according to claim 2, which hybridizes to the polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

5. A method for preparing a hyperthermostable protease, comprising culturing a transformant containing the polynucleotide of claim 2, and harvesting a hyperthermostable protease from the culture.

6. An isolated hyperthermostable protease, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 or a functional equivalent of said hyperthermostable protease.

7. An isolated polynucleotide encoding the hyperthermostable protease or a functional equivalent thereof according to claim 6.

8. The polynucleotide according to claim 7, which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:6.

9. The polynucleotide according to claim 7, which hybridizes to the polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:6.

10. A method for preparing a hyperthermostable protease, comprising culturing a transformant containing polynucleotide of claim 7, and harvesting a hyperthermostable protease gene from the culture.